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PATENT
03959-P0024A WWW/TMO

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants	Ralf Aum Mueller, <i>et al.</i>
Serial No. 10/816,448	Filing Date: April 1, 2004
Title of Application:	Compressed Air Processing System
Confirmation No. 9254	Art Unit: 3683
Examiner	Mariano Ong Sy

Mail Stop Appeal Brief - Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450


Reply Brief Under 37 CFR §41.41

Dear Sir:

Having received the Examiner's Answer, Applicant submits this Reply Brief for the above-captioned application pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §41.41 as follows.

Certificate of Mailing: I hereby certify that this correspondence is today being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as FIRST CLASS MAIL, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Appeal Brief – Patents; Commissioner for Patents; P.O. Box 1450; Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

July 12, 2006


James T. Adams

Reply to Examiner's Responses

Applicant has fully set forth its arguments for patentability in its previously filed Appeal Brief. Herein, Applicant very briefly addresses the Examiner's Responses to Applicant's arguments, as set forth in the Examiner's Answer.

With respect to the rejection in view of Blanz (DE 196 38 226), the Examiner appears to be taking the position that the claimed "valve arrangement" designed and arranged to aerate and lock and to deaerate the parking brake connection due to a signal being generated by the electronic control unit is formed by the "valve 23" together with the safety valve 29" and in combination with brake valve 31." Applicant respectfully disagrees. More specifically, Applicant respectfully submits that it is brake valve 31 that is designed and arranged to aerate and lock and to deaerate the parking brake connection due to a signal being generated by the electronic control unit. Thus, it is brake valve 31 that may be considered to be the claimed "valve arrangement". Valve 23" is merely a supply valve used for a supply of a constant pressure for reservoir 27 and hand brake valve 31, while safety valve 29" is merely provided to help avoid over-pressure situations. Neither valve 23" nor safety valve 29" plays any part in aerating and locking and deaerating the parking brake connection due to a signal being generated by the electronic control unit. As such, neither valve 23" nor safety valve 29" forms any part of the claimed "valve arrangement."

This important distinction may be illustrated by means of a simple example, as follows:

A water conduit leads to a building. Inside the building there is a central valve for blocking the conduit or an overflow valve regulating the pressure of the water inside the building. Downstream of such value, the conduit branches to different systems, e.g. a toilet system, the kitchen and a washing basin, each

with related fittings. These different systems themselves are regulated by their associated valves, i.e. a valve operated manually by a user for use of the toilet or the fitting of the washing basin operated by the user. Accordingly, there are different types of valves, i.e.:

- a) a central valve used for the supply of the building with water and
- b) valves for regulating the water stream in the different (sub)systems.

Corresponding to the passage cited by the examiner, the toilet or washing system might be locked by the aforementioned central valve - nevertheless, the central valve is not a valve for activating and deactivating the toilet system or the washing system (i.e., one can not flush the toilet by actuating the central valve).

Moreover, even if valve 23" and safety valve 29" did form part of the claimed "valve arrangement," Blanz would still not anticipate or render obvious the present invention, as claimed. This is true because all claims of the present application require that "said valve arrangement" be disposed within the common housing. The claims do not require that a portion of, or even that at least a portion of, said valve arrangement be disposed within the common housing. Rather, the claims require that said valve arrangement be disposed within the common housing. Thus, even if the Examiner's interpretation were correct (i.e., that the claimed "valve arrangement" included hand brake valve 31, valve 23" and safety valve 29"), only a portion of "the valve arrangement" would be disposed within the common housing, not "said valve arrangement" as required by all claims.

With respect to the rejection in view of Hilberer (U.S. Patent No. 6,540,308), the Examiner appears to be taking a similar position, specifically that the claimed "valve arrangement" designed and arranged to aerate and lock and to deaerate the parking

brake connection due to a signal being generated by the electronic control unit is formed by the "valve 8a together with safety valve 12 and in combination with parking brake system FBA" Again, Applicant respectfully disagrees. More specifically, Applicant respectfully submits that it is parking brake system FBA that is designed and arranged to aerate and lock and to deaerate the parking brake connection due to a signal being generated by the electronic control unit. Thus, it is parking brake system FBA that may be considered to be the claimed "valve arrangement". Neither valve 8a nor safety valve 12 plays any part in aerating and locking and deaerating the parking brake connection due to a signal being generated by the electronic control unit. As such, neither valve 8a nor safety valve 12 forms any part of the claimed "valve arrangement."

Moreover, even if valve 8a and safety valve 12 did form part of the claimed "valve arrangement," Hilberer would still not anticipate or render obvious the present invention, as claimed. This is true because all claims of the present application require that "said valve arrangement" be disposed within the common housing. The claims do not require that a portion of, or even that at least a portion of, said valve arrangement be disposed within the common housing. Rather, the claims require that said valve arrangement be disposed within the common housing. Thus, even if the Examiner's interpretation were correct (i.e., that the claimed "valve arrangement" included parking brake system FBA, valve 8a and safety valve 12), only a portion of "the valve arrangement" would be disposed within the common housing, not "said valve arrangement" as required by all claims.

For the foregoing reasons, as well as those set forth in Applicant's previously filed Appeal Brief, Applicant respectfully submits that the claimed invention embodied in each of claims 1-20 is patentable over the cited prior art. As such, Applicant

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respectfully requests that the rejections of each of claims 1-20 be reversed and the Examiner be directed to issue a Notice of Allowance allowing each of claims 1-20.

Respectfully submitted,



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